Engagement & Support of College Classes in Non-Reunion Years

HARVARD
Alumni Association
COLLEGE ALUMNI PROGRAMS

The College Alumni Programs (CAP) team in the Harvard Alumni Association (HAA) works in close partnership with Harvard and Radcliffe College class leaders to build and sustain class community, host quinquennial Reunions, engage in non-reunion programs, keep classmates informed through communications, and more.

CAP Reunions and Classes team members carry class portfolios based on five alumni lifecycles to better support you as College volunteers. By working with classes within a common cohort, we are better able to support engagement across classes and between reunions, ramp up upcoming Reunion classes, transition out of Reunion years, and build stronger, sustained relationships between volunteers and staff members. We are eager to work with, get to know, and support you and your class. You can meet our team here.

While we hope this document answers many of your initial questions, please know that it is intended to serve as the start of a conversation between you and your partner on the CAP Reunions and Classes team. Each member of the CAP team is here to collaborate with and make things easier for you and your classmates. We understand that each class's needs and interests are different, and we will tailor our approach based on your class's stage in the alumni lifecycle.

If you are reading this document for the first time because you need help with an event that you or your classmates are conceptualizing, reach out to your staff liaison before finalizing or publicizing the event date or time, extending invitations to speakers or panelists, or securing other important event details.

MENU OF SERVICES

Brainstorming and Advising:

- CAP team members are happy to talk with and advise Class Committees and other class leaders regarding potential ideas and options for events and class communications.
- We can share time-tested approaches from other classes and facilitate introductions to other volunteer leaders.

Sustaining and Convening Class Committees:

- Class leaders are encouraged to hold one annual Class Committee meeting (virtual, phone, in person, or a combination thereof) to identify opportunities for connecting and/or convening classmates.
    - Meeting and communications formats are at the discretion of class leaders.
    - Class leaders are responsible for meeting planning, notes, and materials.
- CAP team members can help by:
    - Providing a Zoom link during regular business hours (Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., subject to staff availability).
    - Advising on features and usage of Zoom.

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Class Communications and Event Marketing:

- Class secretaries and/or webmasters have the capability and freedom to send emails to their classmates directly through their classes.harvard.edu site (if applicable).
    - For assistance, please refer to the class sites user guide.
    - This approach affords classes the most flexibility on timing and content development.
- CAP team members can help by:
    - Sending email messages on your behalf through our Harvard email client (two weeks advance notice and content required). Please review this document for broadcast email policies and procedures.
    - Troubleshooting or providing training as needed for the email tool and/or class website.
    - Advising on print vendors and mailing services.

Class Event Planning On-Campus:

- CAP team members can help by:
    - Advising on and assisting with reserving on-campus space (if the campus partner requires a staff member to be on the reservation).
    - Advising on logistics, timing, and materials. Please note, class leaders are responsible for creating any needed on-site materials, day-of venue preparation, and staffing.

Class Event Planning Off-Campus:

- Class leaders plan for off-campus events and catering independently.
- If you have a partnered treasury, please review the *Budget Planning and Invoice Processing* section of this document for additional information.

Class Virtual Event Planning:

- You can visit the Virtual Engagement Toolkit to review virtual event ideas.
- Class leaders will build the event program content.
- Class leaders will create the event on the virtual platform, manage the logistics of their chosen platform, and staff the event.
- CAP team members can help by:
    - Advising on event logistics, timing, and materials. Please reach out to your CAP staff liaison as soon as you decide to hold a virtual event.
    - Helping to determine CAP staffing needs:
        - If your virtual event is complex enough that you would like to request assistance from CAP staff, please begin that conversation as soon as possible.
        - Please do not schedule your event without discussing timing with your CAP liaison.

        - Please do not extend invitations to speakers or panelists before having a preliminary conversation with your CAP liaison.
        - CAP team members may be able to provide additional support depending on the time of year and calendar availability.
    - Sending email messages on your behalf through our Harvard email client (two weeks advance notice and content required). Please review this document for broadcast email policies and procedures.

Virtual Event Platforms:

- The CAP team recommends using Zoom for your virtual programs. We recognize that volunteer-led groups may want to experiment with other platforms, but for the reasons listed below, we highly recommend the use of Zoom to optimize class participation and predictability. Zoom is accessible and inclusive for your classmates in the following ways:
    - Captioning and transcribing: Zoom offers automated captions that are largely accurate.
    - Recordings: Capturing and sharing Zoom recordings is a straightforward process that allows content to be shared quickly and easily with class members who cannot attend in real time.
    - Zoom has been widely adopted: Nearly anyone who has participated or plans to participate in a Harvard virtual event or meeting has some Zoom experience. If a class chooses a different digital event platform, many participants may need to learn how to use it.
    - Regular updates: Zoom's regular updates continue to offer more flexibility.
    - Please visit the Zoom Resources page of the Officers Lounge for additional assistance.
- Classes may use their treasury funds to purchase a Zoom license as well as other digital event platform licenses.

Event Registration:

- There are multiple ways for class leaders to collect event registrations, including but not limited to email RSVPs and Google Forms.
- CAP team members can help by:
    - Advising on what and how much data to collect, best practices, and which registration method might be best to use.

Budget Planning and Invoice Processing:

- Class leaders independently determine event budget planning for non-reunion events.
- Please make sure you communicate in advance any anticipated expenses with your class treasurer and CAP staff liaison.

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- The class treasury is responsible for full event payment according to each vendor's terms.
- If the class treasury is enrolled in the Partnered Treasury Program:
    - The Harvard University finance team must sign all contracts. If your event requires a contract, please send it to your staff liaison as soon as possible.
    - Class leaders are responsible for collecting all invoices from vendors and sending them to the HAA for processing and payment from their class treasury.
    - The Harvard Alumni Association can assist with credit card processing for payments via event form registration. We will work with you to determine the optimal registration and payment collection process.
- If the class treasury is not enrolled in the Partnered Treasury Program (i.e. the class treasury funds are held externally, and not within Harvard):
    - Class leaders are responsible for signing contracts, collecting all invoices from vendors, and processing payment from their class treasury independently.
    - Class leaders must manage registrations and collect any fees independently.

Guiding Questions:

As you and your classmates consider a potential event, be it virtual or in-person, we suggest you consider the following guiding questions. Having given these topics some reflection will ensure that your initial conversation with your CAP partner will be as productive as possible. We look forward to discussing how we can work with you to bring your idea into reality!

- What is the format of the event (virtual or in-person)?
- Who is the audience for the event? Local classmates, classmates in a particular region, or classmates across the globe? Will you invite alumni from other classes?
    - Knowing your audience will provide insight into the optimal timing for the event.
- What is the theme, or goal, of the event? Will it be purely social, organized around a shared interest, or geared towards intellectual programming?
- Will your event be standalone, or a part of a series?
- How many speakers or presenters will your event feature?
- What are the technical or technology needs of your program? Will there be multiple speakers, multi-media, etc.?
- What is your target or optimal date and time for the event?
- Will you, or someone from your class, be able to run the event independently?
- What types and levels of assistance do you seek from CAP team members?
- Is there any training that you need from CAP team members to facilitate your event planning?
- Does your event require a budget? (If so, please connect with your Class Treasurer.)

The College Alumni Programs team looks forward to working with you and supporting your outreach and engagement efforts on behalf of your class. Thank you for your time, energy, and dedication!